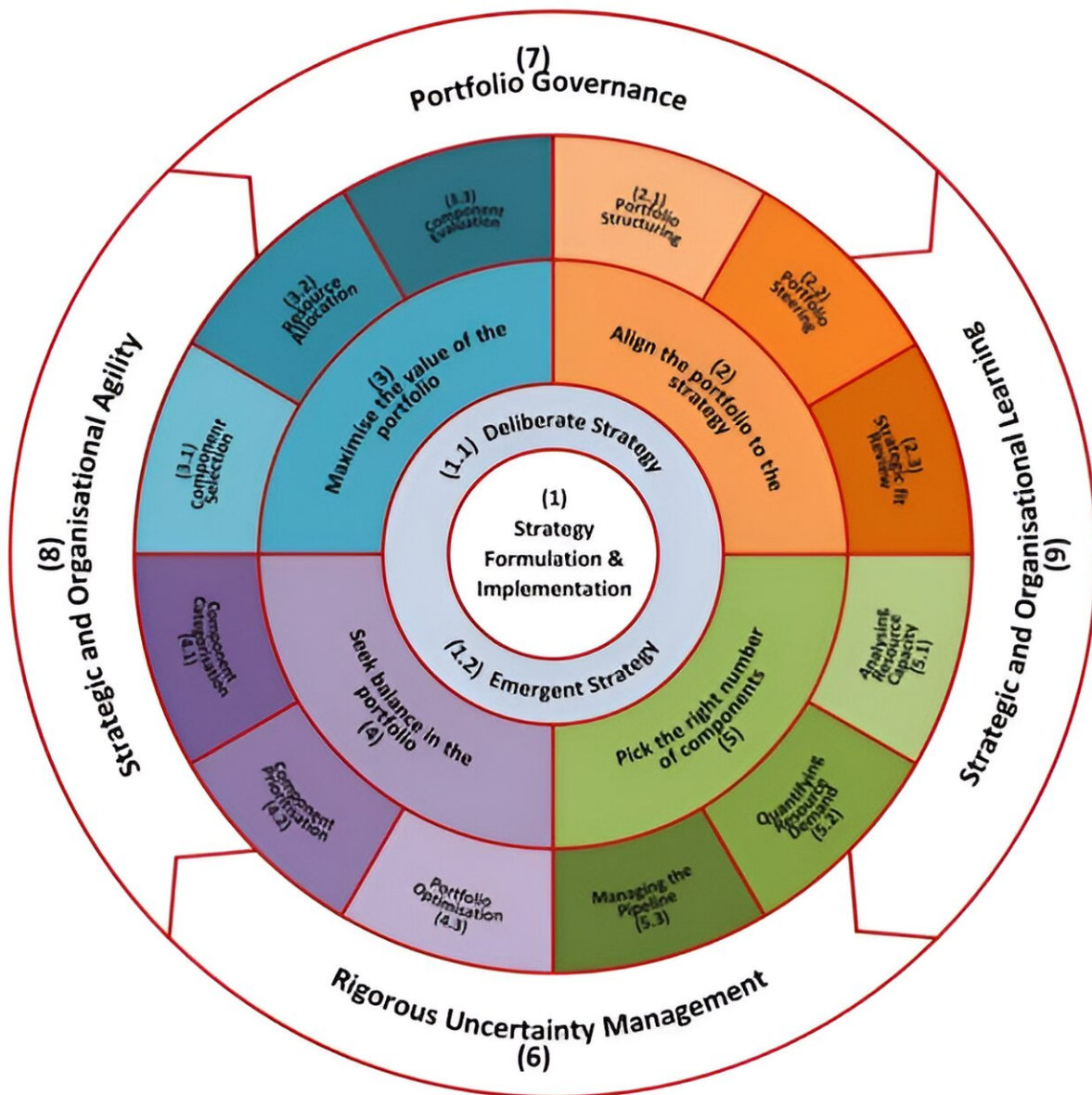


Exploring the relevance of scaled agile practices to agile portfolio management

August 28 2024, by David Bradley



Strategy formulation and implementation as the core focus of portfolio management. Credit: *International Journal of Agile Systems and Management* (2024). DOI: 10.1504/IJASM.2024.140478

The business environment is constantly changing, and sometimes does so very rapidly. Research [published](#) in the *International Journal of Agile Systems and Management* discusses how agile portfolio management (APM) has emerged as a useful approach to allow companies to align their organizational strategies with the demands of this dynamic and complex environment.

Conventionally, portfolio management has relied on predictive methods that work across a range of [project](#) sizes and levels of complexity. However, as businesses increasingly adopt agile methodologies—originally designed for small, closely-knit teams—there has been a shift in portfolio management practices.

Indeed, this shift has become necessary for continued success. Agile methodologies emphasize flexibility and responsiveness and work well with small-scale projects, but they can be problematic when they are used for larger, more complex portfolios.

Kwete Mwana Nyandongo of the School of Consumer Intelligence and Information Systems at the University of Johannesburg in South Africa, has demonstrated that scaled agile frameworks, which have been developed to manage large-scale implementations, offer some value, but even these are often inadequate. He found that this is especially true in industries, such as [information technology](#), where rapid technological change and complex project interdependencies are the stock-in-trade of the industry.

Nyandongo's study goes on to suggest that these frameworks, while useful for large solutions, do not fully address the challenges of managing an entire portfolio in a rapidly changing environment. He says that this shortfall may lead some organizations to struggle with effectively implementing their strategies or responding to new opportunities and facing up to emerging risks.

The answer lies, the study suggests, in taking an even more flexible approach to portfolio [management](#). That approach needs to extend the capabilities of existing scaled agile frameworks and to bring together traditional and agile methods. Such a hybrid approach might better accommodate the deliberate strategies of long-term business plans, as well as exploit the short-term nature of emergent opportunities.

In other words, organizations need to recognize that the methods effective for managing individual projects or even large-scale solutions may not translate directly to managing an entire [portfolio](#). Instead, they must be yet more adaptable than ever.

More information: Kwete Mwana Nyandongo, Relevance of scaled agile practices to agile portfolio management, *International Journal of Agile Systems and Management* (2024). [DOI: 10.1504/IJASM.2024.140478](#)

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